

OCWWS will assess existing National and Regional Instructions on Test Message Formats and Coding, including a recent Eastern Region Supplement to NWSI 10-1804 on Office Drills, for possible inclusion in NWSI 10-1701 or other directives updates within the next 120 days.

Prevention of Incorrectly Worded and Coded Test Messages

All NWS offices will ensure all test messages are correctly worded and coded. NWSI 10-1701, Text Product Formats and Codes, describes the necessary wording and formats in Section 4.2.2.e and Section 4.2.2 Important Note (2). Test messages not correctly worded and coded have a detrimental impact on the NWS relationship with our customers and partners. Since some customers may now begin to focus on UGC and VTEC codes and not the MND or test wording (e.g., pager notifications), it is critical that VTEC coding of test products be correct. Refer to NWSI 10-1703, VTEC, and training related to the VTEC/WBC OT&E on-going now and AWIPS OB 4 later this year.

Unless intended as a real-time, operational or experimental product for public dissemination, all text message products (e.g., warnings, statements, or forecasts) must:

- indicate clearly in the appropriate Mass News Dissemination (MND) headers and text that they are only a test product,
 - regardless of any intention of transmitting the product as a test or,
 - regardless of whether the instructions on the preparation of the product explicitly state that test wording is to be used.

Practice or test products, especially warnings, created or generated on AWIPS workstations will be correctly coded and worded in a professional manner with test wording included. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Internal office drills
- External drills held in conjunction with partners and customers
- Office training or practice sessions
- Software installation and configuration sessions

Furthermore, all NWS offices will make every effort to prevent inadvertent transmission of practice, internal drill, and software setup messages. All messages should be reviewed immediately prior to transmission.

Here are a few examples of proper "test" wording.

Required in a Mass News Disseminator Product Type Line:

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TEST...TORNADO WARNING...TEST
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE RALEIGH NC
405 PM EDT AUG 24 2004
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Sample product headlines:

...THIS MESSAGE IS FOR TEST PURPOSES ONLY...

...NO SEVERE WEATHER IS OCCURRING IN THE MENTIONED AREA...

...TEST WINTER STORM WARNING IN EFFECT UNTIL 6 PM THIS EVENING...

Sample short-duration warning bullet format:

* TEST TORNADO WARNING FOR...
VANCE COUNTY IN NORTH CENTRAL NORTH CAROLINA

Sample narrative statements:

TEST...TEST...TEST...THIS IS A TEST WINTER WEATHER ADVISORY FOR
SNOWFALL AMOUNTS BETWEEN 1 AND 3 INCHES. IN ADDITION, CONSIDERABLE
BLOWING AND DRIFTING OF SNOW CAN BE EXPECTED...REPEAT...THIS IS A TEST
MESSAGE.

TEST...TEST...TEST...THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN (YOUR CITY) HAS
ISSUED A TEST TORNADO WARNING IN CONJUNCTION WITH ANNUAL SEVERE WEATHER
AWARENESS WEEK DRILL...I REPEAT...THIS IS A TEST MESSAGE.

THIS IS A TEST MESSAGE IN CONJUNCTION WITH A DRILL BEING HELD WITH
(MYSTATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY OR MYSTATE SEVERE WEATHER
AWARENESS WEEK).

In short, if it is not a real product, it must include proper TEST
coding and wording. Assume the world could see any message created on
AWIPS.